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Leroy Garrett, Editor

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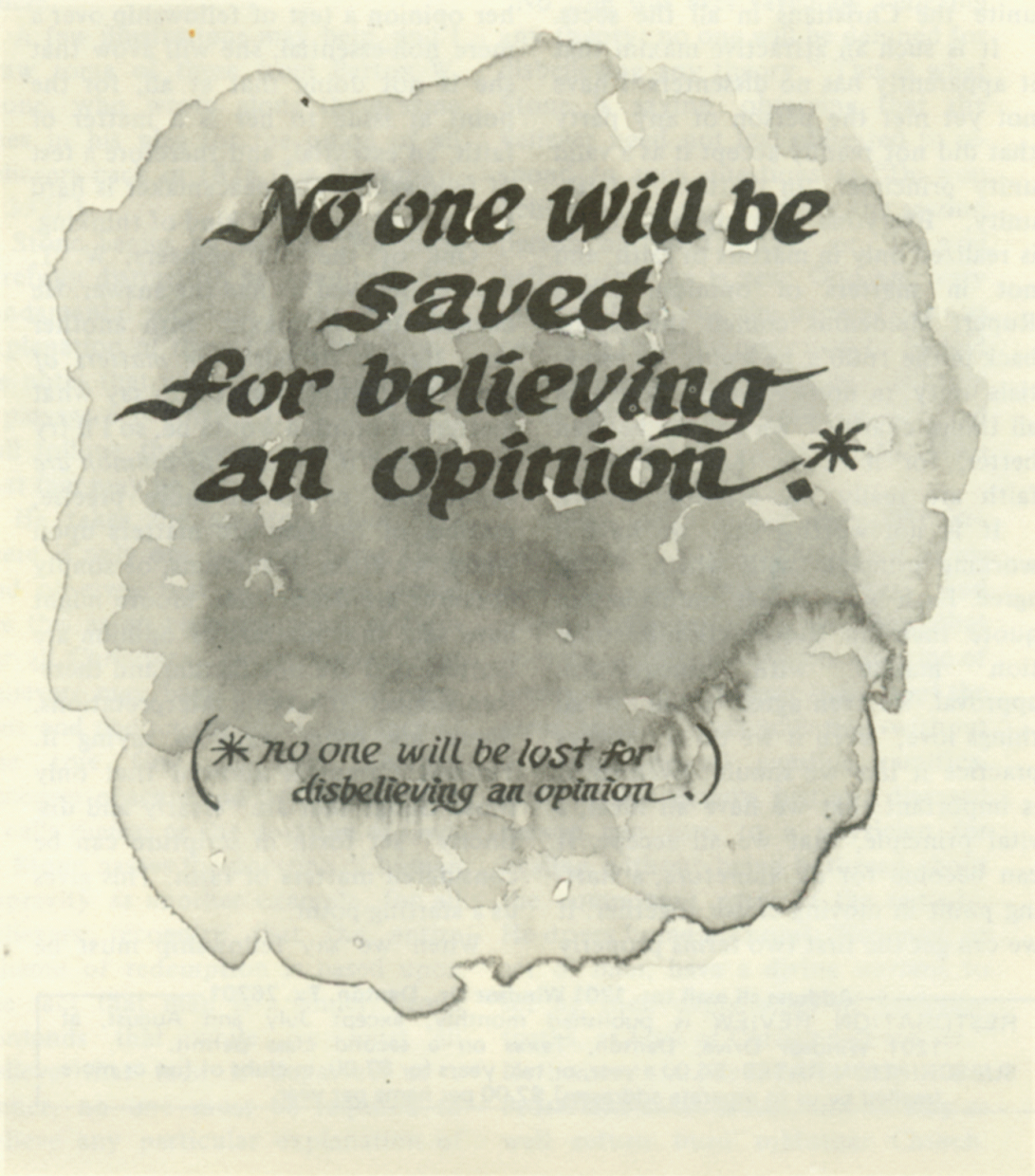

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MATTERS OF FAITH ARE MATTERS OF FACT

Our pioneer leaders had a way with slogans and mottoes, and they served them well in that they became capsules for powerful truths. One of these was "In matters of faith, unity; in matters of opinion, liberty; in all things, love." It was not original with them in that it reaches back to the Reformation in one form or another, but they gave it new life and made it a guiding principle in their Movement to unite the Christians in all the sects.

It is such an attractive maxim that it apparently has no dissenters. I have not yet met the person of any party that did not readily accept it as a valid unity principle. "In matters of faith, unity." Everyone concedes that unity is realized only in matters of faith, and not in matters of opinion. When Rupert Meldenius coined the saying hack in the 1600's, he had it "In essentials unity, in non-essentials liberty, in all things charity," which may be even better, for it shows that matters of faith are really the essential truths.

It is noteworthy that we have a working principle with which we all agree. Each party leader among us can quote that old Reformation-Restoration maxim with unequivocal approval. We even agree to the "In all things love," even if we do not always practice it like we should. Even so, it is important that we have an ideal, a vital principle, that we all accept. It can become for us, therefore, a starting point in moving closer together. If we can get the first two terms properly hitched, faith and opinion, then we might get the love where it ought to be. Or does the love in all things really come first even if it be last in the saying?

Our problem is that we can't seem to agree on which things are matters of faith and which matters of opinion. What is but an opinion to one is a matter of faith to another, and vice-versa. If we charge a sister with making her opinion a test of fellowship over a mere non-essential, she will avow that she is not doing that at all, for the point at issue to her is a matter of faith, an essential, and therefore a test of fellowship. The peacemaker is hard put to deal with this kind of thinking.

One of the old pioneers, W. T. Moore, believed he had the answer. He backed up this maxim with another one, *Matters of faith are mutters of fact.* But he didn't go on to say what matters of opinion would be, so I'll try my hand at it: *Matters of opinion are deductions,* or to be more precise, matters of opinion are matters upon which we form deductions, or simply *opinions are deductions.* Moore might have said that matters of opinion are matters that are not factual and therefore subject to varying interpretations. There are other ways of saying it. Thomas Campbell allowed that only those things that are "clearly and distinctly" set forth in scripture can be considered matters of faith. This gives us a starting point.

When we say fellowship must be based upon "the Bible alone," we can't mean that fellowship is possible only when people see everything in the Bible alike—or even most things—and certainly not each of our parties' pet set of doctrines and their accompanying prooftexts. If we can all agree that fellowship based upon the scriptures alone (apart from all creedalism, whether written or unwritten) refers only to the clear and distinct *facts* of the Bible (apart from our opinions of those facts), then we might get somewhere.

A few illustrations may help, and I draw some of these from Barton W. Stone, who wrote along these same lines in his plea for the union of all believers back in 1828 (his *Biography,* p. 332f.).

Stone begins by saying, "We must carefully distinguish between believing fundamental scripture truths, and any explanation of them by fallible men." He notes that while all may agree that a passage sets forth a truth or fact, it still follows that every *explanation* of that fact may be wrong.

He takes the scriptural fact that there is only one true and living God, and observes that all believers would see this as an essential point of faith for all Christians. Yet he realizes that believers may have many varied opinions and deductions about the fact of one true God. In fact theology becomes obscure and baffling in what it calls theism or the doctrine of God.

Stone names the doctrine of human depravity as another example, for all believers recognize that the entire scheme of redemption is based upon the fact that man is a sinner. Stone contends that while we must all believe that man is depraved or a sinner, no one must be required to believe any particular explanation of this fact, of which there are many that have made their way into creeds.

He next cites the most fundamental Christian truth: Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. If one does not believe this, he cannot be saved. But no one would be able to list all the opinions and deductions, some of them becoming part of what is called "dogmatic theology," in reference to the sonship of Jesus. No one can be required to believe any *theory* about Jesus. Campbell had a way of saying, "No one was ever saved by believing any theory; no one will be damned for disbelieving any theory." This is what Stone is saying, observing that the believer need not feel obligated to respond to such questions as "Do you believe that Jesus Christ is the second person of the Trinity?" or "Do you believe that he is very God and very man, and yet but one person?" It was common for such questions to be laid on the people of Stone's day. He told them that faith is a matter of *fact,* and they needed only to believe that Jesus was the Son of God.

Stone takes a fact like "We are reconciled to God by the death of his Son," a plain Biblical passage, and refers to the unending theorizing that goes on in reference to the doctrine of reconciliation. A sinner can accept the great truth of reconciliation without understanding all possible ramifications of the remedy, just as a diseased person can turn to a physician for healing without being bothered about the component parts of the remedy. He drives home his point: "No man, or set of men,

have a divine warrant to set up their explanation of Scripture truths, as tests of Christian character." He insists that this must be true or the Protestant cause is lost, and we may as well return to the Mother Church.

While Stone was especially concerned with those theories that were being imposed on people in his day, the point he makes is equally applicable to our own situation. We often go beyond what is actually written, beyond the facts, and make our own theories tests of fellowship. A few instances come to mind.

1. *The fact that the scriptures are "God breathed" or inspired.* 2 Tim. 3:16 states this as a fact. But the Bible sets forth no doctrine of inspiration *per se,* only the fact of it. I, therefore, have the right to expect a brother or sister to accept the scriptures as God-breathed, but that is all. When I start talking about inerrancy and infallibility, or verbal inspiration or some other theory of inspiration, I move beyond the fact to my own deduction. It is just as well to make no such move, except as I make it clear that it is only my own opinion.

2. *The fact of the indwelling Spirit of God.* The scriptures are overwhelming in positing the fact that the Christian receives the Holy Spirit. No fact could be plainer than "God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts" (Gal. 4:6). Must we speculate beyond this? To lay down restrictions as to just how God acts in this regard or to theorize this or deduce that is to go beyond the fact itself. True, other facts can be brought to bear upon any given fact, but we must always stay with facts.

3. *The Holy Spirit bestows gifts upon God's children.* Perhaps the charismatic movement has made too much of this and others of us have made too little of it. There is, after all, in scripture the fact of speaking in tongues, and it is sometimes very plain: "Do not forbid to speak in tongues" (1 Cor. 14:39). By taking all that is said on the subject some conclude that this gift was restricted to the primitive church and that it is not for our time, while others conclude precisely the opposite. These are all deductions, not scriptural facts as such. One's deduction may well be the true doctrine, but he cannot impose his interpretation upon his sister until she herself comes to see it as he does. He can only ask her to accept what is clearly and distinctly written, not *his* conclusions from those facts. So, if a sister comes up speaking in tongues, why can't we leave her to her own deduction, her own experience, and her own Master, before whom she stands or falls. She in turn must realize that she can interpret only for herself, and not assign second-rate status to all who do not see it as she does.

4. *The fact that baptism is for the remission of sins.* Acts 2:38 says this in so many words. Something is wrong when one looks at that passage and says that there is no connection between baptism and remission of sins. Surely there is "some" connection, and "in some sense" baptism is for the remission of sins. Otherwise one has to deny a clear and plain fact. But it is something else to make baptism the *sine qua non,* or as Campbell put it, give baptism "an undue eminence" by making it mean more than the scriptures allow. To insist that one must

have a given understanding of the act when he is baptized is also to reach beyond the fact. The fact is that baptism is for remission of sins. If we stick to the fact and forget about our deductions from the fact, we can all "speak the same thing."

5. *The fact that the saints broke bread on the first day.* Since Campbell's time our people have made much of Acts 20:7: "Upon the first day of the week when the disciples came together to break bread ... " We have deduced from this and other passages that the primitive saints took the Supper each first day, I personally believe this is a correct deduction, but it is still a deduction. If we stay strictly with the facts, we have to be less than certain. Another fact is that Jesus said, *"As often as you* break this bread ..." When our friends deduce from this that the time element is not nearly as important as the quality of the act itself, we must concede that this too is a reasonable deduction. Those who celebrate the Table on a quarterly basis claim that it can be made more meaningful when it is not so frequent. An Episcopalian friend of mine here in Denton seems to think we are irreverent in making the Supper so common! Here is an instance of where, when all the facts are assembled, honest hearts may reach different conclusions. We therefore are to recover the "ancient order" as we understand that order. We are to teach this to others, believing we are interpreting the scriptures aright, and if they come to see it as we do, we will feel that we have brought them closer to the truth. But we cannot be dogmatic, and we cannot make such teaching a condition for unity and fellowship. We must readily concede that where the scriptures do not speak absolutely, clearly and precisely, factually and without question, we are yet in the realm of our own interpretation and cannot make such a test for others. We can therefore be at one in Christ with people who take the Supper at different intervals. The fact is in the Supper itself, and in this Christians are in agreement.

6. The fact that the New Testament is *silent on instrumental music.* It is, of course, silent about a lot of things, such as electing trustees and owning real estate, and insuring it (Where is our trust in God!). It is silent about Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, singing schools, the salaried minister in the pulpit, and even the pulpit! It is even silent about congregational singing. These are all facts, facts of silence. The only *certainty* that can be drawn from the first fact is that the New Testament is silent on instrumental music. From that point on each is on his own, deducing and interpreting the silence. If one deduces that the church should therefore be acappella, then he should be acappella. If he interprets the silence differently, just as the acappella person interprets *other* silences differently, then he will use instrumental music. This cannot possibly be made a matter of faith, in the sense of the slogan, in that it is based, not upon a fact of scripture, but upon the silence of scripture.

All this is not to say that there is anything wrong with deductions. We have to draw deductions, the Bible being the kind of book it is. One might avoid deductions only when he is doing something like following the instructions on a prescription bottle or the directions on a can of paint. We only need to recognize that our deductions are fallible and cannot be imposed on others as if they were infallible. Only facts are infallible, not theories about those facts. As we study the scriptures in depth we will of necessity draw inferences and deductions from the facts we assemble. The more

painstaking we all are the more likely it is that we will find general agreement on our interpretations. It is often the case that scholars reach almost unanimous agreement in their interpretation of scripture. We talk about *rules* of interpretation, which implies that if one ignores the rules he might get far afield in his deductions.

I have been reading the premillennial views of R. H. Boll (in the *Boll-Boles debate),* and I am impressed with the way brother Boll collected and handled the facts of prophetic literature, concluding that the Jews will be reconstituted in their homeland and eventually converted to Christ. Brother Boles, his opponent, interpreted the same facts differently and made rebuttal arguments. I am persuaded that brother Boll got the better of the argument, but even he insisted that these were matters upon which Christians can differ and still share a joyous fellowship.

This is what our pioneers were saying in their slogan, "In matters' of faith, unity; in matters of opinion, liberty; in all things, love." Brother Boll believed he had the right to interpret the prophecies the best he could, set them before others for their consideration, believing that all correct interpretations will prove to be a blessing. But he did not believe he had the right to impose his views on others, as binding on them. Nor did he think the amillennialists have the right to make some "anti" position on prophetic teaching a test of fellowship. I agree. The pioneers said it with, "In matters of opinion, liberty."

But there are certain fundamental facts that are essential to the Christian faith. Paul lists seven of them in Eph. 4:1-6: one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God. He sees these as basic to "preserving the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." He would never say that about theories about those facts. These facts all center in the one great fact of scripture, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and Savior. If one believes that in his heart, he is not likely to get far astray in his interpretations, not for long, at least, When one believes that fact and obeys the act of baptism she is saved and initiated into the Body of Christ, and is our sister. As we grow together in Christ we will differ here and there, but that is where the liberty and the love come in. — *the Editor*

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BULLY FOR BILLY!

I read the news releases on Billy Graham's recent visit to Hungary with a great deal of satisfaction, not only for what he did for the Hungarians but also for what the Hungarians did for him.

It is first of all noteworthy that any evangelist would be allowed to enter an Iron Curtain country to preach Christ. The communist government permitted the Council of Free Churches to extend the invitation, and though he was restricted to church facilities and grounds, he was still able to address as many as 12,000 at a Baptist campground and as many as 2,000 in Baptist churches. One of his sermons was on the love of God in John 3:16 and all of his addresses were Christ-centered.

He conferred with the Roman Catholic bishop, who told him that only half of Hungary's Roman Catholics practice their faith and that two million of the seven million cannot even be accounted for. He talked also with leaders of Hungary's Jewish community. In sitting with communist leaders who oversee religious affairs, he shared in a frank Marxist-Christian dialogue. The head of the religious affairs office attended some of his meetings. While the Reformed and Lutheran churches did not sharp in the invitation to Graham, he nonetheless had conferences with their leaders and the Reformed Church bishop introduced him at one service, saying that "a new reformation is stirring in the churches."

Graham revealed while in Hungary that he himself has been changing. He said that his outlook now encompasses the entire world and that his attitude toward Eastern Europe had changed. The Hungarian officials, who at first took the hard line toward the whole affair, grew more congenial toward Graham during the week he was there. They were impressed with his sincerity and warmth, his genuine interest in Hungary, and his concern for the total man in his preaching. He stated while he was there that he now places more emphasis on the Christian's social responsibility than he used to. He kept saying, "I'll never forget Hungary." The experience apparently did something to Graham as well as Graham doing something for Hungary. It is significant that "evangelical" leaders like Graham are talking more about social responsibility and the total man. This has long been the quarrel that liberal Protestants have had with what they prefer to call "Fundamentalism." This came to a head at the recent Lausanne conference on world evangelism when John R. W. Stott accepted the criticism that evangelicals had neglected the total man and vowed that they would give more attention to the social responsibilities of the church. He urged at the same time that liberal Protestants give more concern to the saving of the souls of men. Graham appears to be doing his part as an evangelical.

Graham's rise to a world figure and something of a clerical statesman in our time is phenomenal. An obscure Baptist preacher, who knew no larger world than that encompassed by Bob Jones University and Southern Baptist theology, he now walks with kings and dignitaries the world over. He is barely a "Baptist" any longer, one would suppose, in no real sectarian sense at least, for he is fast becoming a very effective ecumenist. After all, how could one have the experiences he has had and not become truly catholic in his outlook? One cannot travel to the four corners of the earth and walk the streets of its great cities and converse with its leaders of every tribe, tongue and nation, and remain parochial and provincial.

We must all hand it to Graham for one thing in particular, and that is the urgency with which he preaches Christ. Put him where you will, on a late night talk show, in the White House, or behind closed doors with communist officials inside the Iron Curtain, as well as every platform he can get his feet on, that cat is going to talk about Jesus. The report from Hungary says he proclaimed the risen Christ everywhere he appeared. I say bully for Billy! He is a man that can grow and change and stand taller with the years and become more "catholic" and less "Baptist." Again I say bully for Billy!

This kind of growth and change is absolutely imperative for me and my own special people in Christian

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Travel Letter . . .

THINGS NEW, THINGS OLD

The unique thing about the conference at Bethany last July is that it was sponsored by three colleges, one from each of the major persuasions of the Restoration Movement—Pepperdine, Milligan, and Bethany. That fact alone made it significant, apart from its being a seminar on Restoration history, having the ominous title "The Nation Divided, The Body Broken." Its purpose was to bring historians together "to examine the effects of the Civil War and the religious ethos of North and South respectively on this 19th century reformation."

This was my third straight summer at Bethany, and this time I stayed over an extra day so that I could do some things on my own that a conference makes impossible. Even though it was unusually warm for Bethany, I once more walked all over the place. I took special delight in visiting with old town friends, Luta Gordon and Eunice Weed. Eunice "lived" with Alexander Campbell for several years, being the curator of the Campbell Mansion, along with her late husband. She enjoys telling me how more Church of Christ folk visit the Mansion than any of our groups, but that she learned not to argue with them! Luta has probably lived in the heart of Bethany longer than most anyone else, all of her 72 years,. She served as registrar at the college when she was younger. They love our heritage and read this journal with zest. They are my kind of folk, so I can understand them better than I could the sophisticated historians that had gathered.

I also sat with Dr. Burton Thurston. a professor at the college and a Campbell scholar, having studied him most of his life. He bore the 41 volumes of *the Millennial Harbinger* with him through several states, then to Harvard (we were in the Ph.D. program together), then to Beirut, Lebanon, where he taught at the American University, and then back to Bethany—just across the street from where the volumes were published! Burton often refers to the piety of Mr. Campbell, a trait that is often overlooked in a man famous for his intellect. He has long been interested in Campbell's hermeneutics (Now don't say Herman who?) and gave us an unusually fine essay on Campbell as an interpreter at one of our summer seminars. One point he well made was that one of Campbell's rules, apart from the usual ones, is that to understand the scriptures "one must come within understanding distance." Burton recently lost his

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Pilgrimage of Joy . . .

HIGH ADVENTURE IN GREAT BRITAIN

W. Carl Ketcherside

Almost every believer who knows anything about it is willing to concede that the union of forces of the restoration movement in the United States and the United Kingdom seems an act of providence. The work in the latter had its roots in the Scotch Baptist development. In 1833 there was a small congregation of this persuasion meeting on Windmill Street, Finsbury Square, in London. There were hardly ever any visitors, but one Lord's Day morning a young man walked in and sat down near the speaker's platform. He was Peyton C. Wyeth, an American artist enroute to Paris to perfect his talent. He was born at Claysville, fourteen miles from Bethany (then in Virginia), knew Alexander Campbell personally, and had been immersed into Christ.

While in London he had visited various places of assembly only to he disappointed. On the Saturday before the day to which we refer, he had asked God to lead him to a place where men worshiped according to the ancient order. While walking the streets on the Lord's Day morning he found the chapel on Windmill Street and entered. One of the elders was William Jones, author of the *Biblical Encyclopedia of the Waldenses*, and other books of religious significance. When Wyeth told the elderly man there was a great and growing movement in the new world, whose members worshiped as they had that day, Jones was astounded and almost overwhelmed with emotion.

Jones knew of Campbell only as the brilliant opponent of Robert Owen in a debate held in Cincinnati four years prior. He had no idea that Campbell was pleading for the primitive purity of the church. That afternoon in his home he had Wyeth write to Campbell, virtually dictating the letter. A lengthy correspondence was inaugurated which resulted in Jones creating the *British Millennial Harbinger* which reprinted so much of what Campbell was writing. Out of this grew the visits of Campbell to Scotland and England, with their overtones of gladness and sadness, about which many of us know.

That's the way it began in London and I thrill to it. But I am convinced that no one can write the history of the cause I love, as it pertains to London in this century, and ignore the sacrificial work of R. B. and Mary Scott, and the little group of saints meeting at Hope Chapel, in Prince of Wales Road. I had heard of the Scott family from American servicemen who made that home their gathering-place during the war. The family consisted of our genial brother and sister and their four children, Margaret, Dorothy, Isabelle and John. In spite of the fact that Brother Scott was employed as a clerk (the British pronounce it 'clark') and had a limited income they kept "open house" for saints from all over the earth.

Our first introduction to a meeting of the disciples in Great Britain was the day we landed. It was Wednesday, and after tea in the Scott home, where we also met Leonard Channing, a tireless young student and worker for the Lord, we made our way to the little chapel, riding our first double-decker bus. The night was bitter cold. Because of a severe fuel restriction there were no street lights. It was

darker than the proverbial "stack of black cats" and we had to hold hands to keep from becoming separated. The little meeting-house, more than a century old, had been damaged in a bombing raid. No permanent repairs had been made because of priorities on building materials.

We met in a tiny vestry behind the speaker's platform. There were just twelve of us. The gathering was quiet and solemn, with no talking or laughing. Brother Black, down from Dalmellington, Scotland, presided with the same formality as if there had been a thousand present. He began by announcing a hymn to which we turned in a little book called "Hymns for Churches of Christ" which contained 1036 hymns, all without staff or notes. Brother Black suggested the name of the tune we would employ. He then read the first stanza and then we stood and sang the hymn. I do not recall ever seeing an audience in Great Britain remain seated while singing praise to God. After a fervent prayer by Brother Scott, a brother read .the first chapter of First Corinthians. Brother Black expounded upon it from notes he had previously made.

Following this I was asked to speak and was then questioned about what the brethren abroad uniformly referred to as "the American scene." Some of the questions were quite pointed. The American doughboys who had attended during the war had come from all sections of America and all segments of the restoration movement and had efficiently conveyed their own confusion to those whom they met. Some from the same town in the United States met at Hope Chapel and had never heard of each other, because of the rigid factional lines drawn at home. It took a world war to get brethren from the same village to shake hands and attend at the same place. It was very difficult for brethren in a land where there was no "color bar" to understand why there was a "white church" and a "colored church" in the same community.

When we arrived back at the Scott home we sat before the grate on this wintry night and talked for hours. It became apparent to me that it would be difficult to explain to brethren in Britain the multi-faceted complex in America known as "The Church of Christ." It also became obvious that it would he just as hard to portray the British scene to Americans. It was our mutual love for Jesus and His magnetic personality which drew us to R. B. and Mary Scott, and when we read a chapter together and kneeled to pray before the glowing hearth, before the little night remaining would give us a few hours of repose, I felt that God was with us and moving in our lives.

The next morning at 9:00 o'clock we boarded a London Northeast Railway train at King's Cross Station, bound for Edinburgh. We were told there was no guarantee of making it because of the heavy blizzard on the previous day. English trains are very different from ours. The coaches are small and passengers occupy compartments entered directly from the platform and walled off from the rest of the train. Ours had room for six but we were alone in it when we left London. At noon we unwrapped the lunch prepared for us by Mary Scott—cheese sandwiches, meat pies, Sultana cake and muffins, and a bottle of black currant juice to drink. Shortly after we finished eating, three soldiers entered our compartment. Two of them were taking back the third one who had been A.W.O.L. for seven weeks.

We gave them the remainder of our luncheon which they wolfed down with profuse apologies. They had eaten nothing since the evening before. All were members of the Durham Infantry, and stationed in an aged castle in which there was no heat at all. I began talking with them about Jesus and what He had done in my life. As I continued to share my faith with them they listened intently, occasionally asking a polite question. Time flew by and when they prepared to leave us at Newcastle-on-Tyne, one lingered behind, saluted and said, "Sir, this has been the happiest afternoon I have ever spent in my life."

Soon it was getting dark and the little engine was toiling through deepening snow. Finally, we realized we were in a city. There are no conductors to come through and tell you where you are. You determine that from signs on the station platform. When the train stopped I saw no sign so I raised the window and asked if we were in Waverly Station. We were!

It was Nell who first spotted Albert Winstanley in the crowd. He was holding up a copy of *Scripture Standard,* our previously agreed upon badge of identification. "Uncle Will" Allen was there with one of his taxis and we soon covered the twelve miles to Newtongrange where we were to get our first sight of the work of our Lord in Scotland. God richly blessed us by allowing us to stay with "Uncle John" and "Aunt Mary" Pryde. All older folk are designated as uncle and aunt by the younger ones. I became "Uncle Carl" and Nell was always "Auntie Nell" by the younger folk. The Prydes had spent a number of years in the coal fields of Illinois, not too far from Saint Louis, and they eagerly awaited our coming. We somehow think they are still waiting our coming up there where they have long since gone.

Albert and I spent the first day walking from the home of one member after another, wading through deep snow. I shall not forget the cheerful cottage of "Granny Allen" who had been a member of the local body longer than any other person, far beyond a half century. In the evening I met with the oversight of the congregation to answer their questions. They were pleased to learn there were still brethren in America who contended for mutual ministry, and the right of all the brethren to use their gift of edification. They made it clear they had thought that all the American churches had been betrayed by "the spirit of the age" to adopt the "one-man system" as they referred to the hiring of someone from somewhere to come in and pastor the flock professionally. They wanted to know how congregations administered discipline, and how elders were selected and appointed. They were especially interested in whether or not we voted for officers.

On Saturday, March 1, a bus load of us journeyed to Motherwell, near Glasgow, to attend the conference of the Slamannan District churches. A number of congregations had combined their efforts, with a special Evangelistic Committee to receive and disburse funds, and to recommend the places where preachers were most needed. David Dougal, a brother of great preaching ability, was secretary of the conference over which Abe Haldane presided. It was interesting to us that when the Scots wanted to show approval they stamped with their feet rather than clapping their hands. Following tea, I

was asked to speak and afterwards was questioned at length by the audience. Some of the saints were a little skeptical about anything bearing the imprint, "Made in the United States" and we explored differences in our varied concepts, but in deep love and respect for each other.

There is so much to tell our story will seem unduly long, yet there is hardly any way to shorten it without doing an injustice. It was late in the evening when Nell and I trudged down the snowy streets of Motherwell to the friendly home of Willie Wardrop. We were accompanied by his aged father, James Wardrop, almost 85, and the oldest evangelist in Scotland. He told us the history of the movement, with its hardships and trials, as vividly as if it were in "living color." That Saturday night was like a page out of "The Cotter's Saturday Night" by Scotland's favorite bard. Before we retired to our beds with their eider down comforters, our patriarchal brother summoned the family to gather in the glow of the ingle, as the fireplace was called. He opened "the big ha' Bible" and read from it with firm and unfaltering voice. All of us kneeled together and he lifted up his words of petition to "Heaven's Eternal King." I fell asleep with the words of the poem circulating through my mind:

Compared with this, how poor Religion's pride,

In all the pomp of method, and of art;

When men display to **congregations wide**

Devotion's 'every grace, except the heart!

The next morning the sun turned the snowbanks into millions of glistening diamonds for our first Lord's Day in Scotland. It was an invigorating walk between rows of ancient stone dwellings to the little meetinghouse. The procedure was so different from ours I must describe it. The table was set in the center of the speaker's stand. There was one chalice and a small loaf of leavened bread upon it. Three chairs were behind it. Promptly at the time for beginning, the aged James Wardrop, who was to preside, took the center chair. An assistant sat down on either side of him.

The president announced the opening hymn. He read the first verse with impressive voice. All of the audience then arose and sang. Then the president said, "Will some brother take us to the throne in prayer?" A volunteer in the rear of the building prayed. Another hymn was sung. A volunteer came forward to read an assigned portion of the New Testament. He was followed by another who read the Old Testament . Brother Wardrop then made an excellent talk about the meaning of the Supper. Thanks were offered and the assistants bore the loaf and cup to the audience in turn. Each person broke a bit from the loaf as it was handed to him. All drank from the one container. An offering was taken for the furtherance of the work and then a season of prayer was announced. Perhaps there were six or seven prayers in all, fervent and eloquent in their simplicity. Afterwards the president said, "We have been blessed of the Lord in having our American brother among us and I will invite him to come forward and exhort the brethren." Following my remarks there was a hymn suitable to the closing of the meeting and a benediction.

It was all beautiful, impressive and touching.

Nell and I were invited for tea at the home of John Snedden. He was the youngest of the three bishops, being 83. John Anderson was 84, and James Wardrop 85. All three were together with us for tea. It was the first time I had been with three such men, all able speakers and debaters, all with a profound knowledge of the Book. John Snedden asked me if I had ever met a Campbellite. I answered in the negative. He said, "Then you have a new experience today. I am a Campbellite." He meant it. Next to Jesus of Nazareth he admired Alexander Campbell of Bethany. To prove it he pitched in and recited Campbell's "Sermon on the Law" and would have given a goodly portion of "The Christian System" from memory if they had not announced that tea was being served.

What an afternoon that was! In the evening I addressed the "gospel meeting." The saints in Scotland have a clear understanding of the difference between "the breaking of bread service" and a "gospel meeting." The first is for the family of God. Non-members are not invited. If there is to be a Sunday School for the "wee bairns" it is held in the afternoon. It is not a part of the gathering for the edification of the body. In a gospel meeting on Lord's Day night, the message is addressed to the world. It is intended to reach the unsaved with the glad tidings of what Jesus has done for them.

After it was all over we rode the bus into Glasgow, largest city in Scotland, with Brother John Anderson. His home was to be ours for a few days as we went to other nearby areas to share with brethren. My stay with this godly man provided one of the greatest thrills of my whole life. I am indebted to him for insights which helped to change my life.

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A KIND OF PARANOIA

Robert Meyers

Everyone has a moment of illumination, now and then, when light strikes the mind from an odd angle and reveals a new truth, or irradiates an old one in a fresh way.

This happened for me the other day at the close of a university class I teach, called "The Bible as Literature." A young man, for whom I had already developed some admiration because of his test answers and good classroom comments, came up and said: "I have a confession to make."

I suppose Catholic priests get used to it, but those words always startle me and send my thoughts racing wildly over a vast expanse of possibilities. As usual, I missed the right guess by a country mile. This is what the young man told me:

"When I sign up for a course, I always look in the back of the catalog to see where my professor has gone to school. I do this because I want to know how well prepared he is, and also whether I should call him Mister or Doctor." I smiled sympathetically at his cleverness, and he went on.

"When I looked under your name," he said, "I discovered ...." I broke in before he could finish, because what was coming struck like lightning. I knew then why he had been smiling his peculiar smile. "You discovered," I finished for him, "that I had gone to Abilene Christian College!"

I felt that could mean only one thing. "You are a member of the Church of Christ," I said, and he admitted that he was. "In fact," he told me, "my wife went to ACC also." Both of us understood that some piece of significant truth was out in the open now. In this big state university, the world had suddenly contracted. Some of my earlier experiences made me feel a little wary, although I could see only amusement in his eyes as he savored the secret he had kept.

"That's not all," he went on, smiling broadly. "I went to Harding College, and I know about you." He said it in so friendly a manner that I felt no dismay, and he went on to tell me that he attended the most liberal Church of Christ in our town (where there are about 18 of them), and that he had told the minister of that church about the college course he was taking.

"He told me that you and he had talked several times," he explained, "and he likes you, although he said he didn't agree with all your beliefs." That seemed reasonable enough to me, so I made no response to it. Later, as I drove home, I thought about it again and was struck by its implications.

It suggests an almost morbid concern about being Absolutely Right. One may compliment a man whose ideas have sometimes been different from those of the True Church, but one must be extremely careful to say aloud that he doesn't agree with everything the man says.

It is a protective device, used almost unconsciously. Church of Christ preachers often use it even of their own brothers who fill pulpits in sister churches. It's a way of disassociating themselves from any possible "false" idea the other preacher may have.

I can remember that I used to do that, also, but it never occurs to me to do it anymore. I now assume that anyone will understand that whenever there are two men with free and honest minds, they will *always* have some differences of opinion. It is not necessary to assure a third party that this is so, because there is no compelling sense of urgency to be thought Correct about everything.

In fact, when I spoke my own admiration for the minister my student named, the last thing in my mind was suggesting quickly, "But, of course, he has some ideas I cannot share." It would have been true enough, but it seemed self-evident to me, a little like saying, gratuitously, "By the way, you know the sun is above us."

I understand why I feel no such need to protect myself. No one is lying in wait for me, where I am now, to catch me saying what to him is contrary to received church dogma, or even to catch me admiring without proper caution another man who just might have "missed it" on some point or other.

Paranoia comes in all shapes and sizes, and it is obviously not always fatal. But the caution of my student's minister will not seem odd until he escapes it. As he will.

. . . . . .

A couple of things have struck me with fresh force lately. One is that some people employ a studied diplomacy of manner so long that it gets engrafted into their natures and they cannot understand simple, open honesty. When they meet such a thing they must call it bluntness, or lack of discretion, or radicalism. They can no longer imagine a condition of life in which one quite simply and freely says what he thinks, without having to peek around the corner, weigh his words in a scale, or fret over whether his children will be deprived of food because of what he speaks. Their loss is cause for great sadness.

The other thing is the ease with which we read our prejudgments into the conduct of others. I heard that a couple sitting behind my wife and me at a concert by the Harding College Chorus had reported on our "abominable" conduct. We had, it was said, laughed and sneered at the performance.

What we remembered was quite different. We had smiled, because we were so happy to be there, listening, and because we saw lovely children who had lived next door to us in Searcy and who greeted us after the performance with embraces. And we took the director of the chorus to dinner the following day, because we love him very much.

But to the prejudiced eyes behind us, our smiles had been cold sneers and our happiness at being there was evil pleasure. I doubtless leaned over to Billie at some point to whisper, "Hasn't Jan grown to be a beautiful girl?" without knowing that behind me two minds were thinking: "Look at that! He is making fun of Harding's chorus because he hates all things Church-of-Christish."

I have undoubtedly done exactly the same thing to other people, but I repent of it and hope to do better. I want to remember that it is always easy to see, not the person who is there, but the one we expect. *Wichita State University, Wichita, KS*

"The distinction between faith and opinion was one of the most important principles of judgment and action developed by this reformation [Stone-Campbell], making the former imperative and the latter a matter of private liberty." — *C. L. Loos*

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BOOK NOTES

The Disciples of Christ are themselves aware of their neglect of evangelism in recent decades. Their president and general minister has listed evangelism as high on their priority list. Now comes a book from a leading Disciple on *Evangelism's Open Secrets.* Herb Miller, executive minister for Dis-

ciple churches in the Hi Plains area of Texas, has studied the Disciple churches that are growing, and he believes he is passing along some important truths about evangelism in this book. Only 4.25 in paperback.

"The most up-to-date Bible dictionary now available" is what F. F. Bruce says of *The New Bible Dictionary.* It brings you up to date on all the recent research, It would make a handsome gift at 14.95, which is reasonable for a 1424 page hardbound volume. Since it is gift time you may have a loved one who would appreciate *Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible*, which has 118,000 more entries than any other concordance, and it gives Greek and Hebrew meanings for English readers. 15.95 in cloth binding; thumb indexed is 3.00 higher.

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